

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 04648 132144Z  
ACTION IO-14

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R 131700Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1261  
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 4648

FODAG

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: FAO, ETRD, OCON  
SUBJECT: COIR INTERNATIONAL

REF: (A) ROME 4649 (B) COLOMBO 1119

1. IN ADDITION TO REPORT OF FAO MEETINGS ON HARD FIBERS DURING WEEK OF MARCH 6, REFTEL (A), FOLLOWING ARE IMPRESSIONS OF CHIEF PRODUCER POSITIONS ON COIR INTERNATIONAL.

2. INDIA IS VERY INTERESTED IN COIR INTERNATIONAL AND WAS PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN. INDIA REP., J. CHANDRA, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, WAS VERY NEW TO COIR ISSUES AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS, SO HIS STATEMENTS ON INDIAN DESIRES LEFT MANY DELEGATES CONFUSED. AT LUNCH WITH USDEL, HE CITED HIS MINISTER AS PRESSING IMPORTANCE OF COIR INTERNATIONAL AND OPPOSING INDIAN COIR BOARD. THIS MADE KARUNAKAREN OF INDIAN CIR BOARD. CHANDRA STATED THAT INDIA'S PRIME DESIRE WAS TO HAVE COIR INTERNATIONAL'S HEADQUARTERS LOCATED IN INDIA WITH SUB-OFFICE IN SRI LANKA AND RESEARCH OFFICE IN PHILIPPINES.

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PAGE 02 ROME 04648 132144Z

3. USDEL ARGUED THAT THIS DIDN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE IF COIR INTERNATIONAL ONLY HAS ABOUT TEN EMPLOYEES AND CONCENTRATED ON MARKET RESEARCH AS PROPOSED BY FAO REPORT. CHANDRA'S RESPONSE WAS THAT INDIA WANTED COIR INTERNATIONAL TO ASSIST PRODUCTION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND CITED MUCH LARGER BUDGET FIGURES. CHANDRA ALSO MADE POINT THAT IF PRODUCERS CONTRIBUTED MOST OF FUNDS AS INDICATED BY FAO

REPORT, THEN THERE WAS NOT SENSE IN SPENDING THE MONEY IN  
WESTERN EUROPE.

4. IN FAO MEETINGS CHANDRA AVOIDED ISSUE OF LOCATION OF  
COIR INTERNATIONAL BEYOND SAYING IT WAS CRITICAL ISSUE TO  
BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING OF AD HOC WORKING PARTY. HE  
DID AGREE TO DRAFT OBJECTIVES FOR COIR INTERNATIONAL THAT  
ARE PRIMARILY MARKET RESEARCH ORIENTED AFTER MAKING STATEMENT ON  
NEED FOR PRODUCTION RESEARCH.

5. SRI LANKA DELEGATION, P.G. PUNCHIHEWA, MINISTRY OF PLANTATION  
INDUSTRIES, COLOMBO, AND COUNSELOR S.M.L. MARIKAR, ONLY  
SPOKE WHEN INDIAN CHAIRMAN ASKED FOR THEIR SUPPORT WHICH WAS THEN  
FORTHCOMING. THEY INDICATED SUPPORT FOR COIR INTERNATIONAL  
BUT WERE CAUTIOUS NOT TO COMMIT THEMSELVES ON A SPECIFIC  
CONTRIBUTION.

6. PHILIPPINE DELEGATION ONLY SHOWED UP FOR FIVE MINUTES  
OF ONE MEETING OF AD HOC WORKING PARTY ON COIR INTERNATIONAL.  
PHILIPPINES HAVE HUGE COCONUT PRODUCTION BUT DELEGATION DOUBTED  
IT COULD BE USED TO MAKE COIR AS PHILIPPINES USES COCONUTS WHEN  
THEY ARE GREENER THAN INDIA AND ALSO PHILIPPINES HAS  
MANY VARIETIES OF COCONUTS. BOTH OF THESE FACTS MAKE IT  
HARDER TO MAKE A GOOD COIR FIBER. FINALLY, PHILIPPINES  
ARE NOT SURE THERE IS THAT MUCH OF A CHANGE FOR AN  
INCREASE IN PRODUCT DEMAND AND RETURN IS LOW. GARDNER  
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PAGE 03 ROME 04648 132144Z

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## Message Attributes

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